

# St John's College Junior Common Room

## The People's Republic of St Giles

Minutes for the 1st meeting of Trinity Term 2015  
26th of April 2015, 8.30pm, JCR

### i/ Minutes of the previous meeting

### ii/ Matters arising from the minutes

### iii/ Officers' reports (verbal)

The Entz Officers informed us that they had planned and arranged the freshers week festivities and tickets, chosen bop themes for the term, and of course ran the bop the previous night.

The Equality and Diversity Officer told us that she wanted to make sure the planned BME event went ahead this term.

The Welfare Officers reminded everyone about the upcoming STI Event, said the finalist welfare packs were on the way, and also a "secret special thing" planned for the future.

Before moving to Reps' reports, Christina asked everyone to move their stuff out of the JCR Office (*how did you get in there?? - Sec.*).

### iv/ Reps' reports (verbal)

The LGBTQ Rep told us that fun events had been planned, including London clubbing and teas. The OUSU Rep said "business as usual" and to await the next OUSU Meeting.

Ali asked how Rents and Charges were going - Christina explained that we had set up a subcommittee, that we had had meetings with the MCR, that research had taken place over the vac and that all things were progressing smoothly.

### v/ Ratifications

a/ Bike Rep - Edmund Woolliams stood for ratification, to the general merriment of the JCR Committee. Christina asked if he would like to give a 2 minute hust, and your Secretary (desperate to see the position finally filled) made loud protest. Ed told us that he doesn't know much about bikes but is happy to learn, and was duly RATIFIED.

b/ Art Rep - Fania Weatherby & Lauren Kennedy stood for ratification jointly. Their hust mentioned that they both did history of art, had been in contact with Helen (previous Art Rep) a fair bit and knew the ropes, and their art gallery work experience meant they already knew how to manage a collection. They were duly RATIFIED.

c/ International Students Rep - Syrie Byfield stood for ratification, saying she felt her knowledge of issues international students face as well as her knowledge of the UK made her well suited. She felt more should and could be done to celebrate international students in the college, and was duly RATIFIED.

## vi/ Items for discussion

## vii/ Agenda Items

### a/ The motion to support Students for Happiness

Proposer: Cecilia Herbert

Seconded: Georgina Berriman

After some furious pre-meeting consultation with legal experts, Christina outlined the issue that this motion would be legally giving to charity, which cannot be done from the financial motions budget (or the committee would be sued...!). However we are able to do so next meeting (charities meeting), and so this discussion would be to get an idea of interest.

Cecilia outlined the motion (available in the agenda), and explained that the money would be needed for events, which they had planned lots of, to cover room costs etc. A straw poll was unanimously in favour.

### b/ The 'No More Old Skool Elections' Financial Motion

Proposed: Will Van Duzer, seconded: Silas Elliott

Will outlined the motion, explaining that we can't make use of OUSU's free subscription to Mi-voice after they dropped it in the wake of the NUS referendum scandal last year. However the issue was not with the system but rather the people in that situation, so it would be safe for us (as long as the RO has integrity!).

Ali mentioned that Louis Trup (OUSU President) had commissioned a super-awesome bespoke system, and asked that if that came through that we could cancel Mi-voice. Will replied saying yes, that this would only last one year, and Alastair was able to reassure us from his experience on Scrutiny Committee that the bespoke system is at least a year away.

PASSES by clear majority

### c/ The "Entertainment Facilities" Motion

Proposer: Alasdair Lennon

Seconder: Daniel Waldman

Ali outlined the motion rather comedically pointing out unredeemable flaws with all the games room equipment (dartboard has no darts, air hockey table produces no air, tables tennis table has no bats or balls etc.).

Claudia H asked how we can prevent rebreakage in the future, and what would happen if something large was broken. Christina replied with the precedent of the bike that was recently stolen, saying it would be unfair to ask the student (cases of malice notwithstanding) to replace it, and so a fresh financial motion could be brought.

Goodman asked if we could get the gym speaker fixed also, and Ali said college might fix that (emailing works apparently solves all manner of problems).

PASSES by clear majority

### d/ Sky Box Boxing financial motion

Proposer: Tim Ang

Seconded: Danny Waldman (ex officio)

Tim outlined the motion, telling us that this would only cost £19.95 if bought at the right time.

Christina asked how we would prevent other TV being watched at the time - Finch and Tim explained that both TV room democracy would reign, and also that the match is airing at unsociable hours.

PASSED by clear majority

e/ The "Gender-Only Kendrew Gym Hours" Motion

Proposer: Jennifer Smith

Seconded: Lidia Fanzo

Lidia outlined the motion, first saying that where "woman" and "man" have been used it is intended to mean anybody who wholly/partially identifies as "woman" or "man." Jenny continued by saying that she considers herself sporty and confident but hasn't used the machines in the gym because men were in the gym, and that other people she had spoken to agreed.

Matt asked if this was just regarding the Kendrew Gym, which was answered yes. Claudia H said that the smaller gym was a larger problem, due to the confined space available.

On a procedural point, your Secretary asked if Resolves (i) could be removed in favour of "Mandate the Women's Officer to hold a full survey regarding Gender-Only Hours", which was received as friendly.

Louise asked how this would be enforced - the answer was a sign on the door and information in advance.

Jake asked if this had been through the SCR yet - Lidia said it hadn't, but that if the JCR and MCR pass it then we should be all good to be confident with the SCR.

Max made a point via the internet, saying that whilst he was very behind the motion that we should ensure staff, who have rigid schedules, aren't made totally unable to use the gym because of the timings. Jenny responded that there are two gyms but reiterated that there will be a survey.

Finch supported the motion but asked what was being sought (daily, weekly etc.) - Lidia responded two hours a week. Tim said that if only such a small amount is offered, then how will it be of much benefit? Lidia said it will allow people to learn on the machines in a safer environment. Claudia H felt that this indicated we needed a proper induction session - Ali said there's a video somewhere on the college website about the gym but general consensus was that "it's shit".

Cecilia P argued that this motion will make a lot of difference to a lot of people who are genuinely suffering with the current situation, where people feel very uncomfortable. Michael V felt that people would ignore the gender-hours after a couple of weeks anyway, and that this is very inconvenient for grads and scientists who have fixed schedules. He also felt that this was a confidence issue, not a gendered one, and was keen to impress that nobody in the gym is judgemental.

Katy commented that the reason the issue is gendered is because the anxiety men face in the gym is competition with other men, whereas women feel uncomfortable with men being there. She also raised the point that if you paid for a gym (in the real world) that there would be a women's hour. Lidia wanted to rebut the point that it would be forgotten in a fortnight by saying that this happens at other colleges, and works, so it can work here. She also wanted to point out that it is irrelevant whether people in the gym are judgemental - the point is that people feel judged anyway.

Goodman asked how binding the survey would be, and also on a convenience point said that if the survey gave 3-4pm (for example) for the women's hour, that women on science courses wouldn't be able to make it at all. Christina allayed Goodman's fears by saying that the slots are likely to be one during the week and one on the weekend (so scientists will get at least one slot).

Claudia H wanted to reinforce that we need a beginners session irrespective of the result of this motion, which was met with general agreement. Ali said that this is a large issue and that more surveying would be needed, and that we ought to just get a general opinion on the principle first.

Finch, talking about the inconvenience to grads and scientist women if the slot is put at 3-4pm (for example), said that even if we do put the women's slot in the evening for the weekday slot that it's no massive loss for men - only one day a week.

Cecilia P also agreed with having a beginner's session, but wanted to be certain the women's hour would be kept separate. (At this point, Lidia went to shut the unimaginably stiff JCR window, blaming her difficulty on lack of gym hours, which was positively received!).

A move to vote was called, which was opposed, but passed clearly. In summary, Jenny said that we will have a big survey to assess what time, and what gym, and whether somebody would come for instruction amongst other things. Tim responded that there should be a non-gendered beginners session, and didn't like how the motion was framed saying that women were made to feel uncomfortable. Michael V continued by saying that he didn't feel this was a gendered issue, that anybody in the gym would be happy to help a newcomer out, and that the SCR and MCR will say go away anyway.

PASSED by clear majority

#### f/ When the Saints Go Marching In... Again. (Financial Motion)

Proposed: Tom Finch    Seconded: Phil Lucas

Finch outlined the motion, explaining that we could get seven pallets of beers/ciders with the money for this great event to start off everyone's Mayday, as well as seeing some great rugby and supporting our college team.

Christina asked if the drinks would be for just John's students - Finch replied that he put "supporters" to leave it open to alumni, porters etc. that like to come down also. Beth asked if non-alcoholic drinks would also be provided - Finch said that the rule against bringing drinks on-site (hence needing to buy them there) was only against alcohol, but that £25 would be set aside for non-alcoholic drinks anyway.

Cecilia P asked why we couldn't use bookers or another wholesale, but had missed Finch's point that the organisers had banned off-site alcohol which he re-explained. Jess asked if we would charge people, but Finch answered that they want it to be free to encourage people to come down and support, saying that the support last year really made a massive difference (*it was a really spectacular turnout - Sec.*).

Christina asked what would happen to any leftovers - general opinion was that this wouldn't exist...!

PASSED by clear majority

#### g/ The OUSU E&E Divestment Motion

Proposer: Sally Hayward    Seconded: Jen Lord

Sally outlined the motion (see agenda). Jake asked how many colleges had backed this campaign since the illegal occupation of a university building (Oxford) over the vac by another fossil fuel divestment campaign - Ali said that as this was the first day of term no common rooms could possibly have discussed it until today. Ali then asked if they had spoken to himself or the previous E&E Officers about this, to which the answer was no.

In discussion, Ali said that this was something they investigated in the last committee. They met the investors, who told us that our fossil fuel portfolio was relatively small, but also that college would unequivocally not accept divesting there. They focussed instead on arms, and the bankers have gone away to work on it - Ali worried that if we raise this issue again with college, and if OUSU because of our support start making intrusive Freedom of Information Requests, that we might jeopardise the spirit of cooperation not only for the arms investment, but also for upcoming Rents and Charges negotiations. He also said that divestment is very contentious, and especially with companies like BP that support scholarships it could be harmful to students.

Tom W said that we wouldn't be making intrusive FOIs if we only have a small investment in fossil fuels anyway. Jake raised the issue again of the occupation over the vac, and said we might be seen to be backing that, and also reraised the funding backlash (eg: BP). Tom said that they sponsor scholarships to look good, and if they withdrew sponsorship because we divested that would completely be against their reasons for sponsorship. Ali was very sceptical that BP would be completely happy with us divesting, Tom was not. Matt wanted to make clear that there is a massive shortage of engineers and that BP are doing good work to alleviate this.

Ali asked if we could amend out any reference to supporting divestment on a college level, and leave it purely at university level - this was taken as friendly.

PASSED by clear majority

#### viii/ Any other business

Beth reminded everyone that welfare lunch is coming up, Sally that fairtrade brunch is coming up, Cecilia P that charity sweatshirt forms are available, and with Katy also gave a shoutout for the upcoming Oxford Dignity Drive in 2<sup>nd</sup> week. Ssuuna asked what to do about the broken light in the Kendrew Events Room - Christina said to email works. Finch gave a final plug for the rugby final, and Jess asked if everyone could fill out the Rents and Charges survey.

Meeting closed at 21:42.

Danny Waldman  
JCR Secretary  
27/4/2015